



*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MAY 10, 2006

CONTACT: U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
HERBERT HADAD, MEGAN GAFFNEY,
HEATHER TASKER, BRIDGET KELLY
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
(212) 637-2600

**FLORIDA MAN AND THREE OTHERS PLEAD GUILTY
TO MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR FRAUD RELATED TO
FRACTIONAL JET OWNERSHIP SCAM**

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and MARK J. MERSHON, the Assistant Director in Charge of the New York Office of the FBI, announced that DEAN LUCAS pleaded guilty today to two felony charges in Manhattan federal court before the United States District Judge LORETTA A. PRESKA. According to the Indictment, LUCAS and his co-conspirators fraudulently induced dozens of individuals to invest \$4.5 million dollars in a purported aircraft dealer called Select Jet. LUCAS pleaded guilty to mail fraud and conspiracy to commit mail and wire fraud. In addition, three others named in the pending Indictment - LESLIE E. RATTET, SEAN MURPHY, and RANDALL BYROM - recently pleaded guilty to felony charges for their involvement in this fraud.

According to the Indictment, the criminal complaints filed in the case, and LUCAS's statements at his plea, between in or about 2002 and in or about November 2003, LUCAS and his co-conspirators participated in an illegal scheme to defraud investors by soliciting investments in a partnership for the supposed purpose of purchasing an aircraft to be owned by a purported aircraft dealer named Select Jet, which was located in Boca Raton and later Coral Springs, Florida. The Indictment charged that to effect this illegal scheme, LUCAS and his co-conspirators made false and fraudulent representations and material omissions to potential investors to induce these investors to purchase Select Jet partnership-units. The fraudulent misrepresentations included the following: (a) the use of partner-investor funds for the purpose of purchasing and maintaining aircraft; (b) the timing and the amount of dividends previously paid, and to be paid, to partner-investors; © the activities of Select Jet, including the ownership of aircraft;

(d) the amount of sales commissions paid to sales representatives and sales brokers on investments made by partner-investors in the Select Jet partnership; and (e) the profitability of Select Jet. LUCAS and certain of his co-defendants also hired numerous "salesmen" who made similar misrepresentations to the victim-investors in return for undisclosed "commissions," which exceeded the 33% limit detailed in the partnership offering materials.

The Indictment and criminal complaints filed in the case allege that LUCAS and his co-conspirators knew - contrary to the representations to investors - that Select Jet and the partnership owned no aircraft. In addition, the Indictment alleges that investor funds were misappropriated, among other things: (a) for the personal benefit of LUCAS and others; (b) to pay commissions to sales brokers and sales representatives that exceeded 33% on numerous investments by partner-investors; © to pay Select Jet's operating expenses and to continue the fraudulent scheme; and (d) to pay money to certain partner-investors in order to conceal the fraud and lull the partner-investors into a false sense of security.

Additionally, according to the Indictment and LUCAS' statements at the time of his plea, LUCAS concealed two prior fraud convictions when speaking to partner-investors and potential partner-investors, including: (a) a conviction, in or about 1991, in the State of Arizona, for a felony fraud offense related to an advance fee scheme for which LUCAS was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment; and (b) a conviction, in or about 1993, in the State of Florida, for a felony organized fraud offense related to a securities fraud for which LUCAS was sentenced to four years and six months' imprisonment.

LUCAS, 45, resides in Coral Springs, Florida. As a result of his plea, LUCAS faces a maximum sentence of 20 years in jail for mail fraud and 5 years in jail for conspiring to commit mail and wire fraud. In addition, each count carries a maximum fine of \$250,000 or twice the gross gain or loss resulting from the crime. At the time of his plea, LUCAS agreed to a sentencing range of 97 to 121 months' imprisonment. Judge PRESKA set September 20, 2006, as the sentencing date for LUCAS.

Previously, on May 4, 2006, LESLIE E. RATTET, who worked as a sales representative for Select Jet and held himself out as an executive vice president of Select Jet, pleaded guilty to mail fraud, wire fraud, and conspiracy to commit mail and wire fraud. RATTET, 64, of North Miami Beach, Florida, faces a maximum sentence of 20 years in jail for the mail fraud and wire fraud counts and 5 years in jail for conspiring to commit mail

and wire fraud. In addition, each count carries a maximum fine of \$250,000 or twice the gross gain or loss resulting from the crime. Judge PRESKA set August 4, 2006, at 11:00 a.m. as the sentencing date for RATTET.

On May 5, 2006, SEAN MURPHY, who worked to oversee the Select Jet sales force and also as a sales representative for Select Jet, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit mail and wire fraud. MURPHY, 42, of Weston, Florida faces a maximum sentence of 5 years in jail. In addition, the count carries a maximum fine of \$250,000 or twice the gross gain or loss resulting from the crime. Judge PRESKA set September 19, 2006, at 4:00 p.m. as the sentencing date for MURPHY.

On May 8, 2006, RANDALL BYROM, who was a licensed pilot and was listed in the Select Jet partnership materials sent to investors as Chief Pilot for Select Jet, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit mail and wire fraud. MURPHY, 41, of Stuart, Florida faces a maximum sentence of 5 years in jail for conspiring to commit mail and wire fraud. In addition, the count carries a maximum fine of \$250,000 or twice the gross gain or loss resulting from the crime. Judge PRESKA set July 6, 2006, at 4:00 p.m. as the sentencing date for BYROM.

Mr. GARCIA, praised the outstanding efforts of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the investigation of this case.

Assistant United States Attorneys RITA GLAVIN and ALEXANDER H. SOUTHWELL are in charge of the prosecution.

###

06-063